



**Airport Way Interchange Project  
Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC)  
Meeting #2 April 16, 2008**

**SAC Members in Attendance:**

Arch Miller  
Pia Welch  
Steve Sieber  
Randall Thayer  
Paul Norum  
Bryan Ableidinger  
Lee Johnson  
Bill Barber  
Raye Miles

**Project Staff:**

Christine Egan (JLA)  
Shareen Rawlings (JLA)  
Robin McCaffrey (Port of Portland)  
Brian Baker (HDR)  
John Bosket (DKS)  
Leslie Howell (Howell Consulting)  
Andy Johnson (ODOT Region 1)  
Stacy Thomas (ODOT Region 1)  
James Gregory (HDR)  
Scott King (Port of Portland)

**SAC Members Absent:**

Marcy Emerson Peters

**Welcome and Introductions – *Christine Egan (JLA)***

Christine welcomed the group and led a brief round of project team introductions and new SAC member introductions - thanking committee members for their participation. Christine walked through the objectives of the meeting, highlighting the following goals:

- Review existing conditions for traffic, transit and key constraints for the project area
- Identify and prioritize community issues and values

She asked the group if there were any comments or edits to the SAC Meeting Summary from the SAC Meeting #1. Arch Miller had several comments and edits to the meeting summary. He also mentioned a concern regarding the “hump” (sight obstruction) that is created by the topography of the I-205 interchange – he suggested that a solution to this concern be pursued as a temporary/short term project area solution.

Robin McCaffrey followed up on two action items/follow up questions from the previous meeting. She stated that the transportation analysis she referred to in the SAC meeting #1 found and projected the problem to occur between 2011 and 2015. In reference to Arch’s question from the last meeting regarding passenger facility charges, she noted that it seemed doubtful that this project could pursue these charges, but did not have a definitive answer to this question. She mentioned that the Port would continue to work with FAA to provide an answer to Arch’s question.

**Introduce Purpose and Need Statement – *Christine Egan (JLA)***

Christine walked through a brief introduction to the purpose and need statement. She explained that purpose and need statements are typically created by agencies to frame the project problem statement/issues in a positive way, or a positive statement that states what the agency hopes to accomplish. She noted that the solution is not stated in this process, and that the purpose and need statements help to frame data analysis and a decision making process for the project. Christine explained that interim issues had been developed by the project team based upon stakeholder interviews, but that input from the SAC and other project committees would help to broaden an understanding of project issues that would then be translated into project goals and objectives. Leslie Howell explained that the project team does not have forecasted traffic data available, which would need to be in place before the project can move forward to determine project needs. Christine reminded the group that developing a purpose and need statement, and translating that statement into goals and objectives for the project are required as part of the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) process.

### **Existing Conditions – John Bosket (DKS)**

John Bosket led the group through a PowerPoint presentation – highlighting existing traffic conditions and transportation findings within the project area. He explained that existing conditions serve as a baseline for projections into the future – which will help to determine project needs and goals. He explained that while the project purpose statement focused on northbound traffic on Airport Way, the transportation study area focused on a larger catchment area. He explained that the project team cast a wider net for traffic analysis in order to determine impacts on a larger scale.

He began with a map highlighting natural constraints surrounding the project area including:

- The Columbia River
- Columbia Slough
- I-205
- and existing developments in the area

He explained that the traffic analysis also looked at existing connections for bicycle and pedestrian travel, and looked for gaps in the system. Bill Barber asked if there were future developments planned for Airport Way that would attract or cater to bike and pedestrian users. Scott King explained that due to the high speed I-205 ramp access and flow of Airport Way, the Port does not anticipate a need for sidewalks or other pedestrian features on Airport Way through the interchange. John and the group confirmed that there did not appear to be a real demand for these types of features.

John Bosket went on to discuss existing transit facilities. His analysis and finding focused specifically on walking and biking gaps between transit shops and access points. Bill Barber mentioned that there is a highly used bike path along Marine Dr. John highlighted this path on the map – explaining that this connection was shown in light

grey. John then moved on to describe some of the geometric (design) deficiencies in the project area. These include:

- Tight interchange spacing: safety and operational considerations between Airport Way and Killingsworth interchanges. This creates maneuverability challenges.
- Too many driveway access points on Airport Way.
- Killingsworth interchange design is difficult for truck traffic.

John went on to describe some of the traffic volume findings within the project area. He explained that the area has witnessed a steady growth in traffic demand, but recently (in the last couple of years) there appears to be a flattening or leveling out of traffic volumes on project area roadways. He mentioned that this may be because I-205 is reaching capacity- population growth is certainly not decreasing traffic demands. He explained that traffic patterns today show a significant hourly variation at certain intersections/roadways. John mentioned that the traffic analysis did not include Friday traffic, which he acknowledged was a concern, as Fridays tend to be busier.

John also described direction flows within the traffic study area. Steve Sieber asked if traffic volumes in the morning on I-205 suggested that commuters were taking other routes across the river in the p.m. Steve asked if the traffic peak on I-205 in the morning was higher than the afternoon. Robin McCaffrey asked for the group's input regarding the traffic volumes and peak hours described by John. Bill mentioned that the a.m. traffic seemed to be more spread out. The group also confirmed traffic volumes on Alderwood. John presented information regarding traffic volumes, in terms of daily volumes traveling in both North and South directions. Bill asked if the Port had a number in terms of how many of these trips in the study area are attempting to access the PDX terminals. Scott said that it was difficult to put a definitive answer on that – explained that better understanding destinations would be helpful in analysis and in determining a solution. John explained that there is a survey that just recently went out to help determine trips to the airport. He said that he would present back on the information that they were able to pull out of those surveys.

The presentation went on to describe traffic operations in terms of mobility standards. He explained that Airport Way was close to failing in terms of traffic operations, but was not failing completely. Instead, the roadway fails at isolated intersections throughout the project area. He explained that there are 3 key constraints in the project area that contribute to the variability in traffic.

**Constraint 1.** The Airport Way/I-205 northbound intersection has nearly reached capacity, with heavy left and right turn movements competing for access to the freeway.

**Constraint 2.** The I-205 northbound on-ramp from Airport Way is over capacity, with a merge point that causes back-ups into the intersection below.

**Constraint 3.** Near-capacity conditions on I-205 northbound, the climb up the Glenn Jackson Bridge, and maneuvering for the SR-14 Exit combine to make merging into the mainline freeway difficult for Airport Way traffic.

John used a video to highlight intersection traffic volumes associated with Constraint #3. Randall Thayer discussed some of the issues and concerns that he associated with movement on I-205 northbound. Randall described the experience of traveling to Mill Plain and to other areas above Mill Plain. John confirmed Randall's comments, and explained that I-205 is a major constraint in the traffic study area.

Lee Johnson suggested that the project restrict traffic merging left until the island on I-205. He explained that with the right lane loaded with SR-14 destination tips, the left lane is full of commuters that are not as interested in SR-14. The group confirmed that this multi-use/multi-destination creates tensions between drivers. The group discussed merging barriers.

Lee noted the difference on US26 when merging signs were enforced by police – he explained that this really made a difference in traffic flow.

### **Issues Workshop – Christine Egan (JLA)**

Christine described the issues workshop, asking the group to think about issues and to think about translating issues to project goals. She mentioned that the project team would work to create objectives and develop criteria to support project goals determined through this process.

She asked the group to think about issues as a stakeholder and described the workshop process. She asked group members to write down one issue per sheet of paper. The project team then took these issue statements and began to organize them on the wall according to themes and/or topics. Issues/themes identified include:

#### **Congestion**

- Exclusive freight/carpool and vanpool lanes on Airport Way (between PDX & I-205)
- Extended stacking on Airport Way during peak hours
- Backups too long on AW during pm peak
- Free flow of traffic to Cascade Station and PDX
- Cascade Station traffic increases all routes from area causing more failures at intersections
- Back up and congestion on Comfort and Alderwood
- More utilization of NE 82<sup>nd</sup> Ave. (it appears to be underutilized)
- Merge delay (from westbound AW to NB I-205)

- Reduce time to access I-205 going north in the afternoon
- The entrance to and exit from the Airport are less than half mile apart. Northbound freeway entrance is Sandy Blvd., and when a person merges onto I-205 NB, then have to immediately go to the "exit only" lane to go to the airport.

#### **Spillover Traffic**

- Sandy Blvd. symptom of AW failure. Made worse by AW issues
- Spillover/escaping from AW to Sandy Blvd making it fail
- Traffic infiltration in neighborhoods
- Mitigation for Cascade Station not enough as it was designed to push traffic to Sandy Blvd. Sandy Blvd fails when traffic spills over from AW or Cascade Station

- Non-traditional traffic on side streets due to back ups and causes cut through traffic

#### **Signals**

- Lack of stoplights on Cornfoot/ Alderwood and Cornfoot/ Columbia
- Length of traffic light change gives accidents

#### **Business, Economy**

- Delay at business entrance to street
- Freight movement
- Economic growth will slow as congestion increases
- Intra area movement of freight
- Traffic tie ups cause business patrons to go elsewhere
- Avoidance of Airport Way during peak times delays routing mobility of both commerce and people
- Restrictive traffic on Airport Way and Sandy causing loss of business
- Lack of access to Cascade Station or Glenn Widing business during peak pm
- PDX passenger growth
- Increased travel times for PDX users (need to program more time for a trip to PDX)

#### **Travel Demand Management**

- Reduce travel demand through car and vanpooling
- Need a transportation management association for airport and vicinity
- Need for incentives for air travelers and airport employees to use transit, bikes, carpools and vanpools

#### **Environment**

- Fuel conservation
- Air quality issues

- Columbia Slough and Columbia River/Marine Drive as regional environmental assets
- Balance bike/ped and environmental needs (air and water quality) with economic growth
- Impacts on the fresh water lakes in the area, specifically Myers Lake near Home Depot and Johnson Lake, which was previously partially filled during earlier highway construction project.

#### **Transit**

- Transit expansion
- I-205 LRT expansion north to Vancouver (want it to happen)

#### **Safety**

- Reduce danger of merging from I205 and AW onto Cascade Station overpass
- Improve safety for biking from Cascade Station to Marine Drive bike paths

#### **Geometrics (design issues)**

- Corner too tight at the intersection of Holman/ AW for large trucks. Slows traffic movement

Christine explained that issues were also identified by stakeholders through the stakeholder interview process. These issues were presented to the public in the first open house where community members reacted to the issues/concerns that they determined to be the most important. Andy Johnson with ODOT described several comments that were raised at the Airport Futures Open Houses held in Vancouver, Washington.

Bryan Ableidinger mentioned that with gas price increases, Vancouver residents are less willing to cross the Glen Jackson bridge to battle intersection issues on the east side of I-205 where retail development has occurred.

**Next Steps – Christine Egan (JLA)**

Christine discussed next steps and the SAC Meeting #3, scheduled May 7th, 2 p.m – 4 p.m. She explained that the project team will start to develop goals and objective statements that will then go to the PDT. These statements, with PDT recommendations will then come back to the SAC at their 4<sup>th</sup> meeting for final review. These goals and objective statements will help to create project evaluation criteria.

Christine asked for group input on the SAC meeting schedule. Several date shifts were decided:

- SAC Meeting #4 scheduled for June 25<sup>th</sup> is now scheduled for **June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2-4 p.m.**
- SAC Meeting #5 scheduled for July 16<sup>th</sup> is now scheduled for **July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2-4 p.m.**

**Action items**

The following materials and decisions require follow-up and/or action.

No.	Action Item	Responsible
1	Request for project Glossary	Christine Egan
2	Use of Passenger Facility Charges	Port of Portland
3	Forecasted traffic data	AWI Project Team traffic analysis
4	Traffic data outlining commuter trips to the airport (destination) as a percentage of traffic study area trips	AWI Project Team/Port of Portland